

Flowers & a Switchblade

CREATED BY **NIC KOLLER & WESTON RIO MORGAN**

FEATURING **CANDICE LEE & BRIDGET PECK**

SOUND DESIGN **BETH KELLOUGH & BOB KELLOUGH**

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Created by Nic Koller & Weston Rio Morgan

2019/ VR 360° video/ USA

Synopsis:

An everyday scene -- a real-life conversation in Brooklyn's Prospect Park -- collaged together from hundreds of videos to form a fractured, hyper-stimulating, 360° Cubist world.

Artist Statement:

Flowers & a Switchblade is a 360° video collage that was assembled from hundreds of moments captured on multiple iPhones in Brooklyn's Prospect Park. The experience documents a real-life conversation between Candice & Bridget, two millennial women who had never met or talked before.

The world we have built is unlike anything you've seen in VR. It is our world made digital, fractured into pieces & reassembled with all of the process's seams & glitches showing. It is Prospect Park, a sprawling green space in NYC deconstructed into its smaller parts. Candice & Bridget are assembled from roughly 12 videos each. Three iPhone cameras were positioned on each of their faces to capture their expressions during their entire conversation.

In part, I selected Candice & Bridget for this project as a social experiment. They have different education levels, personalities & backgrounds, and I saw potential for conflict & drama in a discussion between a law student & a "free-spirit". Candice & Bridget found that they have much in common despite their differences. In *Flowers & a Switchblade*, they explore topics that would interest any 30 year old. They discuss tattoos, self-harm, immigration, work/life balance, and laugh about how they would not want their mothers' lives.

I've been working in video collage for over 5 years and have made a number of innovations in that time, but this is the first video of its kind to be presented in 360°. I shoot all my footage on iPhones, and my handheld approach makes the image breathe through the expanding & contracting of its smaller video parts. I'm interested in our short attention spans, and have found that this alternative multicamera style speaks to the hyperstimulated, over-exposed space that many of us live in today. I've also created a rig which mounts multiple iPhones to capture movement as a collage. I've used this rig to document people skateboarding, dancing, snowshoeing, and to capture the facial expressions in this project.

Making *Flowers & a Switchblade* on almost no budget would not have been possible 10 years ago. This project is inextricably linked to smartphones, both in process & concept. I'm interested in the integration of the analog & digital that I see in our daily lives, and I think this project simulates that dynamic as the analog human connection is recorded, processed & presented digitally. I've been excited to see this 360° video collage world come together over the past two years, and I hope you find the experience stimulating.

Credits:

Created by
Nic Koller
Weston Rio Morgan

Featuring
Candice Lee
Bridget Peck

Sound Design
Beth Kellough
Bob Kellough

Creative Director
Nic Koller

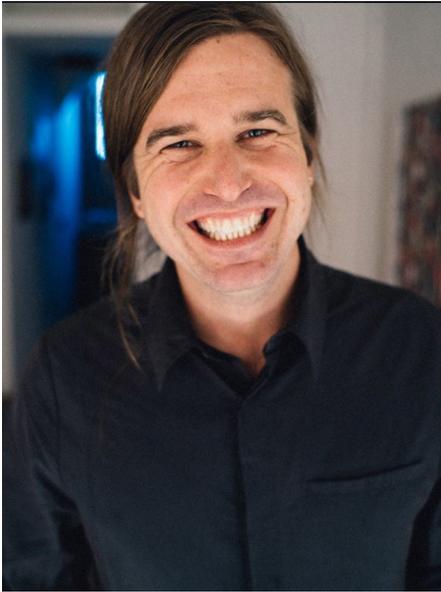
Technical Director
Weston Rio Morgan

Production by
Weston Rio Morgan

Original Music by
Nic Koller

Special Thanks
Damisi Rosemond

Creator Bios:



Nic Koller is a multidisciplinary artist whose works explore the outer-boundaries of collage. Regardless of the medium, Nic depicts common people & places as representations of people while embracing spontaneous, collaborative moments as the foundation of their process. Nic curates for Straight Through the Wall, a guerrilla Arts Collective that projects video art onto walls throughout NYC, and creates cartoons for the New Yorker.

Website: nickoller.com

Vimeo: <https://vimeo.com/nickoller>

Instagram: @nickoller

Email: hello@nickoller.com



Weston Rio Morgan has an affinity for the blending of art and technology. With a background in post production and a passion for adventure, Weston seeks to capture and display the world's beauty through 360° and traditional video. Alongside his video passions, Weston juggles Alaskan summer labor and wood working to maintain balance of hand and mind skills.

Website: westonriomorgan.com

Instagram: @morgasaurus_wes

Email: weston.r.morgan@gmail.com

Our Collaborators:

Flowers & a Switchblade features **Candice Lee & Bridget Peck**, who were generous to give their time to our project and to be vulnerable for the sake of art. Candice & Bridget are not actors. They are real people who we filmed having a conversation together for the first time. Candice recently graduated from Cardozo School of Law at Yeshiva University and is now working as a human rights attorney. Bridget left her 9 to 5 job following her appearance in our project, and traveled to the Pacific Northwest, New Zealand, Vietnam, Indonesia, Hungary & Spain.

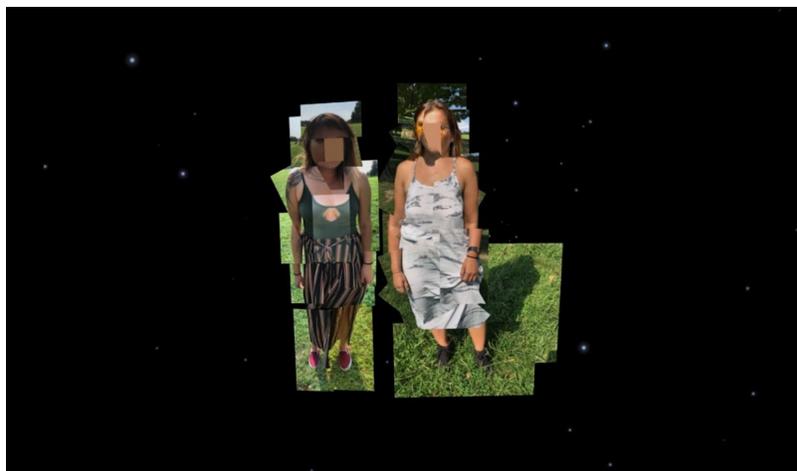
The Story:

Way back in 2015, I was first trying to capture motion in video collages while Weston was an undergrad at the University of Texas. We were connected for an afternoon shoot by (my former bandmate & Weston's film professor) Geoff Marslett. The three of us convened at a Home Depot where we borrowed a bright orange, industrial-sized platform dolly-- stuffing it in the trunk of an SUV. We spent the afternoon filming. Weston longboarded down an empty street as I rode along on the dolly and Geoff pushed. We shot one iPhone video at a time to produce the following video collage: <https://vimeo.com/130831564>

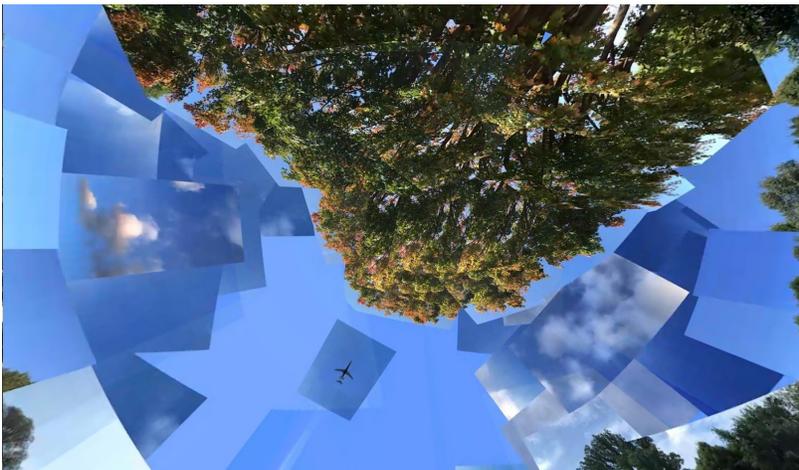


Years later, Weston DMed me on Instagram: "Have you ever thought about doing this in 360?" And so work began on *Flowers & a Switchblade*, a new, fully 360° video collage that we slowly convinced ourselves was theoretically possible. The project would later challenge us with 2-week-long renders, After Effects project files larger than 3GB and an insatiable need for more computing power. Through trial & error, stubbornness and many vacant stares at the screen, the collage slowly began to materialize.

I was making work about conversations at that time, pairing people from my life who might have relevant or challenging dialogues together into diptychs (each person isolated on their own canvas), and I thought something as simple as a conversation might make for a cool 360° world. Bridget & I had been taking ballet classes together, and I knew Candice through my significant other at the time. I was sure they'd have a compelling conversation, but I didn't know if Candice & Bridget would get along. We met at Grand Army Plaza, and walked deep into Prospect Park together. They made nervous small talk as I set up my gear, and soon we were recording their conversation.



Project Stills:



Project Website:

Flowersandaswitchblade.com